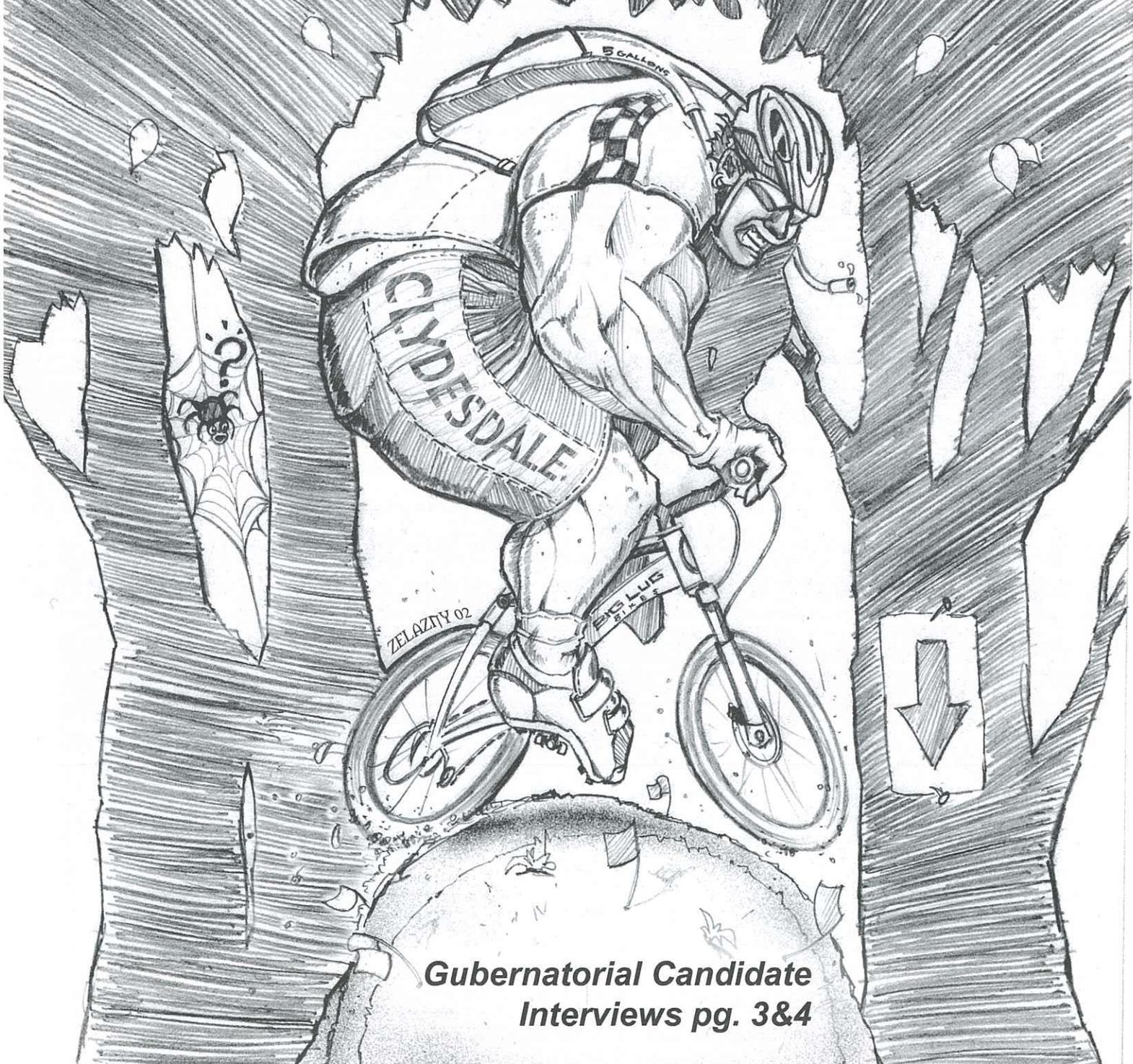


BENT RIM BUGLE

The official newsletter of the MMBA - Issue #61 - Fall 2002



*Gubernatorial Candidate
Interviews pg. 3&4*

The ABC's of Safety: Air bags. Buckle up. Children in back. Outback L.L.Bean Edition shown with optional equipment.
Subaru is proud to be associated with the International Mountain Bicycling Association.

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for people who are into coasting. It's for you.

SUBARU

The Beauty of All-Wheel Drive



The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501-(C)(3) non-profit organization. We have 1,600 members in nine chapters throughout Michigan. The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users.

The Bent Rim Bugle is published four times a year (March, June, Sept, Dec.) by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and distributed to all members. It is made possible by volunteers and riders like you.

Bent Rim Bugle

Editor:

Bryan Mitchell bryan@mitchell.com

Letters/Comments/Submissions
Bent Rim Bugle
5119 Highland Rd PMB 268
Waterford, MI 48327

Email: brb@mmba.org

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5119 Highland Rd PMB 268
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Visit the MMBA on the web, **new and improved site**, for contact information and much more.

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Cover art by Scott Zelazny

TODD SCOTT

The Prez Sez

president@mmba.org



Nick Long, the MMBA Northeast Chapter President was seriously injured last Saturday. While diving off of a boat, Nick damaged his 5th and 6th cervical vertebrae and cannot move anything below his chest, including his fingers. His spinal cord is apparently badly bruised but not severed, so recovery is possible, but far from guaranteed. He has undergone surgery to remove disc material from the spinal canal and to fuse his 5th, 6th, and 7th vertebrae. He has already begun physical therapy. In addition, Nick and wife Margaret are expecting their second child at the end of September.

Nick has been working tirelessly to maintain mountain bike trail access in the Gladwin Field Trials Area. He has been working with the DNR, equestrians, and field trial users in developing a plan that would provide trail access without impacting the field trial activities.

Cards and well-wishes can be sent to Nick's home at 802 Main Street, Essexville, Michigan 48732. He can be reached via email at: nicklong@chartermi.net.

We hope you join us in wishing him the best - a full and speedy recovery.

The National Park Service is developing a plan for the Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore near Traverse City. The preliminary alternative (#4) would allow on-trail cycling in the Alligator Hill region.

However it would not allow bikes on either Manitou island, nor other areas designated for wilderness protection. There's probably not much room to budge on this issue since it is National Park Service policy that land "found suitable for wilderness must be managed as wilderness unless specifically rejected by Congress."

The most recent alternatives can be viewed on-line at:
<http://planning.den.nps.gov/document/ACF1CA%2Epdf>.

Comments may be sent on-line using:
<http://planning.den.nps.gov/parkweb/comments.cfm?RecordID=75>.

You may know that Marquette was recently voted one of the Top-Five places to ride in the U.S. What you may not know is the Marquette Country Convention & Visitors Bureau has bike trail maps available. To get the maps, simply fill in their web site request form at www.marquettecountry.org.

Venting on the Internet

Having recently spent some time with the IMBA folks, I've learned that they get inundated with emails, many of which flame IMBA for destroying trails and mountain bike opportunities -- something they simply do not do. Those emails get a "Thanks for your comments" reply and simply go into the recycle bin.

We get the same emails and bulletin board postings regarding the MMBA and I suggest we follow IMBA's lead.

That's not to say we should ever ignore constructive criticism or be open to new ideas, just as IMBA doesn't. However, it's a waste of time to passionately counter the hyperbole that has little to no basis in fact.

If you want change, present facts in a professional manner, be willing to get involved to effect the change, and contact me. If you just want to vent and flame, "thanks for your comments." :)

Todd Scott
president@mmba.org

Gubernatorial Candidate Posthumus answers some MMBA questions.



Dick Posthumus—Republican

What is your position as to the relationship of the state-to-state lands, parks, campgrounds and forests?

I grew up in Michigan and spent my summers on the Great Lakes and in our parks," Posthumus said. "I'm a farmer and a conservationist. I'm an avid hunter and a fisherman. I'm someone who loves being on the water and a father who wants my kids to have safe water to drink. It's out of these experiences that I know there is something special here that you don't find in every state in the country. No other state has been blessed as the home and guardian of the Great Lakes. As we look to the decade ahead, there is no greater environmental issue facing our state than the protection of our water, and I believe we must be aggressive in meeting this challenge head on and my Michigan Marshall Plan will do just that.

As we look to the decade ahead, there is no greater environmental issue facing our state than the protection of our water, and I believe we must be aggressive in meeting this challenge head on and my Michigan Marshall Plan will do just that.

Do you think recreational use decisions should be made in Lansing or at the local level by land managers?

A combination. The state has a legitimate role in providing overall resource management – a big picture view of state resource management if you will. Local units have a role in resource management at a more micro level, i.e. parks and green space, rails-to-trails, public lake access, etc. The state needs to be mindful of local input and it should be deferred to whenever practical. A good example is the current debate over how to manage the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. While not a state/local issue, it is a federal/local issue with state implications. In this case the federal government has sought no local input into its new management plan and that is wrong.

(Candidates Press Release on Sleeping Bear Dunes)

"The rule of thumb to visitors in our parks has always been 'Leave only a footprint'. If the National Parks Service has its way, residents and visitors to Sleeping Bear dunes won't even be able to do that. The Service's plan flies in the face of common sense, severely limits public access to the park, hurts the activities of Michigan hunters and fisherman, puts in jeopardy Northwest Michigan's important tourism industry, and threatens good jobs. The Parks Service should know better than to wake a sleeping bear."

Posthumus is referring to a plan announced recently by the National Parks Service to update its 20-year General Management Plan for the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. To comply with a 20-year old congressional recommendation to restore wilderness areas throughout the national parks system, the plan outlines steps to close more than 13 miles of county and park public roads, restrict access to Lake Michigan beaches, and close off nine miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. It also fails to address documented safety concerns regarding parking and boat launches near the Platte River. In addition, Posthumus said the Parks Service plan violates a 1976 "Memorandum of Understanding" entered into by the National Parks Service and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources that requires state input in any decision affecting "hunting and fishing within the Lakeshore," and the "management of natural resources on lands and waters within the Sleeping

Bear Dunes National Lakeshore."

In his letter to Secretary Norton, Posthumus wrote, "Neither the Michigan Department of Natural Resources nor the Michigan Natural Resources Commission was consulted in the development of this plan. In fact, Michigan's Natural Resources Commission went so far as to pass a resolution in opposition to the plan."

"I urge you to intercede on behalf of those of us in Michigan who have enjoyed the park for decades and the millions of visitors who continue to travel to the Great Lakes State to visit the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore each year."

"Our parks and lakes are here for people to experience, take care of, and enjoy," Posthumus said. "That's a tradition we're proud of in Michigan, and I'm committed to protecting it."

Do you think the state should make a commitment to our natural resources by designating a specific percentage of the state budget to natural resource items?

I feel that it ought to be left up to the legislature. In some ways, our financial commitment to our natural resource is already earmarked. Oil and gas revenues are dedicated to the Natural Resource Trust Fund and hunting, fishing, park and camping fees are dedicated to resource management. Our commitment is to make sure we have the revenues we need to properly manage our resources and that those funds are spent wisely.

What is your favorite outdoor activities?

I enjoy mountain biking when I am not campaigning.

How do you view the impact of non-motorized activities to state land activities?

It is a constant challenge to manage our state land effectively. Issues of use – hunting, fishing, vehicle access, camping and hiking access are all an ongoing concern. We always need to be cognizant of the need to strike a balance between preservation and recreational use.

Continued on page 6

Gubernatorial Candidate Granholm answers some MMBA questions.



Jennifer Granholm—Democrat

What is your position as to the relationship of the state-to-state lands, parks, campgrounds and forests?

Our state public lands help define Michigan. They not only support our economy by providing outdoor recreation opportunities, but also shape the character of Michigan. Millions of Michigan citizens each year enjoy and appreciate the camping, hunting, fishing, swimming, boating and biking opportunities these lands provide. By coming in contact with nature, these lands also help educate new generations about the importance of the outdoors in our lives. As Governor, I will do all that is within my power to protect and enhance our public lands.

Do you think recreational use decisions should be made in Lansing or at the local level by land managers?

I support empowering field staff in the Department of Natural Resources to make recreation use decisions, consistent with statewide policies and guidance.

Do you think the state should make a commitment to our natural resources by designating a specific percentage of the state budget to natural resource items?

Keeping in mind that the current budget crisis makes it irresponsible on my part to make absolute funding commitments to any budget, I do think the portion of the state budget currently devoted to natural resources and environmental protection- about 2%- is unacceptably low in a state so rich in natural wealth and beauty. I support increased funding for these priorities- budget permitting, including the development of both fee and voluntary sources, but I do not support add ional earmarking of a fixed percentage of the state budget for any program areas.

What is your favorite outdoor activities?

My family and I enjoy spending vacation time each summer in rural and northern Michigan, where we savor forests, beaches, and blue skies. I enjoy occasional fishing outings. Close to home, we walk and bike and I participate in stream clean-up activities in the Rouse River watershed.

How do you view the impact of non-motorized activities to state land activities?

I am a strong believer in the value of non-motorized recreation on public lands and as Governor will support the expansion and improved maintenance of hiking and mountain bike trails.

What is your position on non-motorized transportation with regard to urban-suburban planning?

We need to increase the role that non-motorized transportation plays in urban and suburban areas. It can grow not only as a means of recreation but also as a method of commuting for thousands of residents of these areas. I will ask the state Dept of Transportation to explore and I crease federal and state funding for bike links in urban ar-eas.

What would the state do under your administration to increase or sustain greenways in or near metro areas?

I am excited by the greenways movement. The Southeast Michigan Greenway Project, a vision for a network linking Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties will offer great improvements in quality of life for the region. As Governor, I will direct the Departments of Natural Resources, Transportation and others to offer their full cooperation to this and other greenways initiatives. The state can provide administrative and logistical support, provide access and easements for greenways on state land and direct both federal and state funds to support greenways projects.

Would you support the creation of non-motorized zones in urban areas?

I would need to have more details on this concept before offering an opinion.

Would you support the creation of an advisory board representing various recreational groups to work with the DNR?

Yes. I believe state policies can only benefit from the full participation and consultation of the groups affected by those policies. It's time to open the doors of state government to the people of the state again.

What is your position on the Dept of Environmental Quality and should it remain an independent department or be moved back under the DNR?

My long-term goal is to recombine the DEQ and DNR. Both agencies are concerned with protecting the magnificent ecosystems that characterize Michigan. It makes policy and administrative sense to unite them. If elected, I will appoint a transition team including the public to help draw an organization plan and timetable. I am committed to changing the leadership of the DNR to assure that the agency invites the public bank into the decision making

Continued on page 6

"FEATURED SHOP" >> MAIN STREETS BIKES—OXFORD & SHELBY TOWNSHIP



Main Street Bikes is located in downtown Oxford as well as out on 26 Mile road in Shelby Township (Near Stony Creek Metro Park). Owner Steve Gealy has been in the bicycle biz since 1974 as a racer, rep and owner of Main Street Bikes since it's opening in 1995.

Steve's current in-shop product line includes mountain and road bikes from Cannondale, Trek, Gary Fisher, Giant and Klein and an extensive line of BMX equipment from Haro, Hoffman and Redline.

Main Street's mechanics are some of the best in the area, just ask the Main Street Bikes sponsored riders next time you see their Blue and Gray jerseys at the trailhead, local Crit or the next MMBA event.



If you need a city bike, just to tool around town, or a race ready road or mountain rig, or anything in – between, the good folks at Main Street Bikes will go out of their way to accommodate you.

Photos by Lesli Maes

Forget football and basketball. If you or your children are biking enthusiasts, then going to college as a cyclist or mountain biker is now an option.

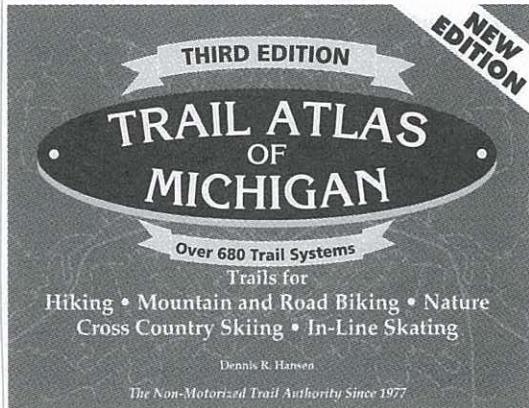
Travis Mullen, a west Michigan native, received a mountain bike scholarship and is attending school this fall in Kentucky. "It basically paid the difference for me to go there as an out-of-state student instead of Grand Valley"

Mountain bike and cycling scholarships can be found by reviewing the NCAA website at:

**[www.race-ncaa.org/
scholarship_info.html](http://www.race-ncaa.org/scholarship_info.html)**

Dennis Murphy

Trail Atlas of Michigan, 3rd Edition



The 25th Anniversary Edition! This 3rd Edition is totally revised for 2002. The first revision since 1997. The only comprehensive guide of non-motorized trails in Michigan. Covers hiking, x-c skiing, mountain and road biking, in-line skating and nature trails. Over 680 trail systems, 789 pgs, 11" x 8.5" & 5 lbs! Every trail entry includes at least one map (often more), addresses, phone no's, web sites, trail head directions, complete trail descriptions, difficulty ratings, general trail information and much more. 7 pages of C/C & CVB phone No.& web sites for easy trip planning. Time tested (25 yrs) trail location system for every part of the state. 11 page index! The undisputed non-motorized trail authority for Michigan since 1977.

\$34.95 plus \$2.10 tax. Shipping / handling are FREE.
Hansen Publishing Company, 1801 Birchwood Drive
Okemos, MI 48864

Dick Posthumus

What is your position on non-motorized transportation with regard to urban-suburban planning?

Generally speaking, how local units decide to regulate non-motorized transportation is a local matter. I believe that the state should not interfere with that type of planning.

MDOT expedite?

What would the state do under your administration to increase or sustain greenways in or near metro areas?

I have been a supporter from the beginning of rails-to-trails programs and will continue once I become Governor.

In addition, I would like to explore expanding the concept to water trails, which would tie in existing rails-to-trails with lakes and rivers. I am also committed to focusing the Natural Resource Trust Fund on acquiring more urban green space, which has not been a priority in the past.

Would you support the creation of non-motorized zones in urban areas?

The state ought not dictate how an urban community is planned. That should be a decision of the local unit with feedback from those who live and work in the area.

Would you support the creation of an advisory board representing various recreational groups to work with the DNR?

I would like my department to develop relationships at the local level with those who are interested in resource management and work on a day-to-day basis building trust and cooperation between the state and locals.

Lansing-based boards and commissions are not always reflective of those around the state who share our love of the outdoors. I want to get the department and its management out into the hinterlands, rather than having formal advisory boards that meet here in Lansing.

What is your position on the Dept of Environmental Quality and should it remain an independent department or be moved back under the DNR?

Architects have a saying that form should follow function. I believe that is especially true when it comes to state government. I am not wedded to or divorced from the current structure. As Governor, I will reshape government in the shape the best meets my policies goals, such as those outlined in my Michigan Marshall Plan to preserve and protect our water.

Would you keep KL Cool on as DNR director or appoint someone else?

Regardless of the fact that the NRC appoints the DNR director, it is way too early to say who will or won't head any department. Clearly the Lt. Governor expects to put his own people in place, some of those faces will be familiar and some will be new. (Answered by Sage D. Eastman, Posthumus Communications Director)

Jennifer Granholm

Would you keep KL Cool on as DNR director or appoint someone else?

I am committed to changing the leadership of the DNR to assure that the agency invites the public back into the decision making process and to assure that the agency operates with an ethos that considers not just the immediate implications of policies and programs, but also the effect on future generations. When the DNR operated this way in the past, it was regarded as one of the best state natural resources agencies in the nation and I want it to regain and strengthen that reputation in my Administration.

A huge thanks to MMBA member Dennis Murphy for composing the questions and keeping in touch with the two candidate's camps to make sure we got responses in a timely manor for this issue of the BRB!



Photo by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

Michigan native Kelli Emmett who is a NORBA pro riding for Luna Chix recently paid a visit to Michigan and hit Maybury for some riding. Maybe we'll see her at the Iceman again this year?



Photo by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

"FREERIDING: That moment of time between gasps of air, and the discovery of your own blood dripping on the earth, wondering how that little scrape happened- If

there was someone there would they see the joy in your eyes? Instead its just you, your bike and a happy medium. My preferred medium is usually asphalt, dirt when I'm feeling crazy, wood if I'm on my vert bike, but in general, it doesn't really matter. What does freeriding mean to me? If you get a solid answer could you please pass it on..... as of now it has alluded me for years- I'm told I'm a freerider but have yet to see the relevance of that title. I guess its the free-spirit that makes you kick away laughing as your wheels roll, There always following each other aren't they ! One inch at a time is a profound way to measuring joy, but if you really think about it, the joy of cycling lasts a lifetime. Freeride? That IS the question: I know this because Webster's has a definition for it, it just seems a little different than mine."

Greg Flowers Michigan Rider and self proclaimed bikeAholic for 34 years

" The greatest beauty of the mountain bike is the original intent for it to be a true all-terrain bike - the freedom to ride anywhere. I feel free on my bike when I can ride right from my driveway to trails, free from the necessity of using my car to get there. I feel free when my rig works well on a 5,000-foot climb and can still handle a descent with wheelie drops - or riding 20 minutes of bike lane to grab a burrito. To me, freeriding is the simplicity of one bike to get you through everything. Freeriding is freedom."

Travis Brown - Trek-Volkswagen Racing Team, 2000 Mountain Bike Olympic Team Member (from IMBA's web site)

"Freeriding is not about racing and it's not about going fast. Freeriding also isn't about five-hour epics in the mountains: that's cross-country riding. Freeriding is dirt jumping, trials, urban, downhill, shorestyle, etc. It's about pushing the limits of technical mountain biking. It's about going bigger and throwing style. It's about going out to the jumps and having fun riding with your friends. More than anything, it's about pushing the envelope and developing your personal style."

Judd de Vall, Pro Santa Cruz Downhill Racer. Former IMBA Staff (from IMBA's web site)

"Freeriding to me is a mix of each individuals riding ability, personality and own flair of style all piled up under an everything goes attitude umbrella title called FREERIDING."

Gary McLaren Michigan Rider-theARMSite.com

"Freeriding is not about what you ride or where you ride. It's about your attitude. The free in freeride means your mind is free. It means you do it all. You don't only pedal to the top. Your bike setup is not dictated by the pros. You don't only covet singletrack. And, most important, you have your own style."

Paul Turner - Founder of RockShox, owner of Maverick American, former IMBA board member (from IMBA's web site)

The MMBA is recognizing that not all mt. Bikers are new. Not all mountain bikers are racers, and not all mt bikers fit into someone else's mold. But all mt bikers love to ride regardless of what you call them, or it. There's now a freeride resource section in the MMBA web library. It includes some IMBA links and photos from Todd Scotts recent trip to Copper Mountain's skills arena. You can now get there directly with the URL below.

**[http://www.mmiba.org/
library.htm#freeride](http://www.mmiba.org/library.htm#freeride)**

What is Freeriding to you?



The **MMBA** has adopted the **International Mountain Biking Association's (IMBA)**
Rules of the Trail:

The way we ride today shapes mountain bike trail access tomorrow. Do your part to preserve and enhance our sport's access and image by observing the following rules of the trail, formulated by IMBA, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. These rules are recognized around the world as the standard code of conduct for mountain bikers. IMBA's mission is to promote mountain bicycling that is environmentally sound and socially responsible.

1. Ride On Open Trails Only.

Respect trail and road closures (ask if uncertain); avoid trespassing on private land; obtain permits or other authorization as may be required. Federal and state Wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

2. Leave No Trace.

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trailbed is soft, consider other riding options. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

3. Control Your Bicycle!

Inattention for even a second can cause problems. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations.

4. Always Yield Trail.

Let your fellow trail users know you're coming. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely.

5. Never Scare Animals.

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.

6. Plan Ahead.

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding -- and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling

Also Remember:

Spring Thaw Conditions.

We strongly urge you to avoid riding the trails during the spring thaw period. Water from the melting snow cannot pass through the frozen ground, so it puddles on the trail surface. Tire ruts help channel this water and cause erosion. The rule of thumb is the ground has thawed when the earthworms come out.

If you want to ride and unsure of the trail conditions what should you do? Our suggestion is to call the park or check the MMBA **bulletin board**. If you don't get an answer from these sources, make two plans: one for the trail and one for nearby paved or dirt roads. If you get to the trail and find it muddy, switch to the road plan. If you're unsure, practice abstinence. Waiting a week or two for the conditions to improve isn't the end of the world. It may help save the trails and your equipment. Of course another option is to ride when everything is frozen solid, typically in the early morning hours, but be watchful of icy spots.

Bring out your bikes and polish up
your helmets to raise funds for MMBA
Mountain Kids with the MMBA
Southeast Chapter's



Sixth Annual Backroad Boogie

Saturday, September 21, 2002 9:00am - 4:00pm

WHAT IS IT?

A backroad tour through scenic North Oakland and Macomb Counties starting at Stony Creek Metro Park mountain bike Trailhead in Shelby Township, near Rochester MI.

HOW FAR DOES IT GO?

Tour lengths from 6 miles (all paved or single track) to 28, 37 or 48 miles (rolling dirt roads) with options to do some single track riding on three different trails.

WHAT'S IT ALL FOR?

Raise funds for the Mountain Kids program. Mountain Kids is a MMBA sponsored youth recreation program designed to provide mountain biking day trips for at-risk intercity children.

SIGN ME UP!!!

Mail completed application to:

MMBA, c/o Peg Gutmann, 7215 Belleville Road, Belleville Michigan 48111-1183.

Make checks payable to: MMBA Southeast Chapter

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone(s) (_____) _____

Individual Registration \$15

Family Registration \$20

For day of registration, add \$3

Total enclosed \$ _____

(Park Fee, \$15 annual sticker, daily park fee - \$3, paid at the gate)

THE FINE PRINT

In consideration of the acceptance of this application, I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, release, discharge and indemnify the Michigan Mountain Biking Association, Stony Creek Metropark, HCMA, Paint Creek Trailways Commission, Polly Ann Trail Council plus sponsors, their representatives and successors, directors, officials, employees and volunteers, from any and all claims of injury or damages suffered by me as a result of my participation in or traveling to or from the MMBA Backroad Boogie. I fully understand that bicycle riding is potentially hazardous. I should not enter the Backroad Boogie unless I am medically able. I assume all risks associated with riding in the Backroad Boogie, including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effect of the weather, traffic and conditions of the road, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. I understand an approved helmet is required to be worn while I ride.

Signature of rider / date

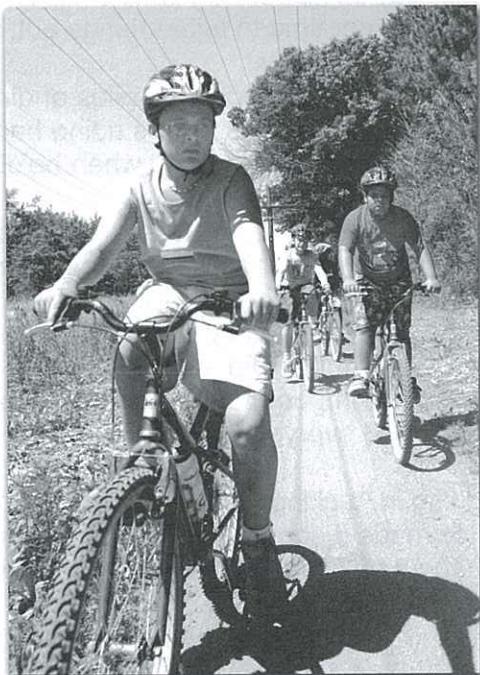
Signature of parent or guardian / date



MOUNTAIN KIDS CORNER

Hi, my name is Sarah Manning and I am the new MMBA Mountain Kids Program Director. I am very excited about taking over this position from Karen Millar. Karen did a wonderful job of leading this program and I am hoping to continue that work. Tom Klinkman will continue to help with the trailer and bikes; I appreciate all of his help. I am an elementary music teacher at Davisburg Elementary in Davisburg, Michigan. My students have participated in three mountain kids events over the last two years and I have volunteered at other events. I am looking forward to providing mountain kids outings for other students throughout the state of Michigan. If you would like to volunteer or schedule an event please contact me at: manning@blclinks.net

Sarah Manning—Mountain Kids Program Director



Editors Note: Kudos should go out to the Gary Fisher and Trek demo crews for setting up one of the kids and the councilors with bikes so they could hit the trail as well!

Van Buren Parks and Recreation Mountain Kids Event

On Sunday, July 14th, eleven kids and two counselors from the Van Buren Parks and Recreation hit the trails at Island Lake State Park. Van Buren Parks and Rec. takes children from their area on various outdoor field trips. The kids experience such things as white water rafting, canoeing and mountain biking. The participants ranged in age from 8-13 and many of them seemed anxious to hit the trails. The kids were then paired up with an MMBA adult volunteer, chose and got fitted to a bike and helmet, rode around the grass and then hit the trails. They seemed to enjoy themselves as they traversed the flats and hills. On their return to the trailhead for hotdogs and potato chips as well as a group picture, they looked exhausted but they seemed to have fun. As they were eating their lunch, there were many stories about who had the best crash, cuts & bruises and who seemed to be the fastest. Ah yes, another eleven mountain bikers were born. Thanks to all of the volunteers that helped out at the event, your help makes it a success.

Sarah Manning



Photos by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

For more information, or to schedule an event, contact Sarah Manning. manning@blclinks.net

The Possible Climb

- by Mark Hara

A friend of mine recently got divorced. It took him by surprise -- one day, his wife Jen just told him she was unhappy. Rick asked her what they could do to help alleviate the problem. "I could move out," she said. Ostensibly, the reason for her unhappiness was that he wasn't "deep" enough. He's pretty well educated -- B.A. in Philosophy and Religion, Master's in City Planning -- and he has a good job as a planner. But she wanted someone to read poetry with her in the evenings, and he wasn't that guy. She'd found someone else who said he was.

I was at a loss as to what to do for Rick. "It's like my wife was taken over by aliens," he said over coffee. He shook his head, bewildered. "I just have to keep hoping she'll do what she needs to do and come back." Come back? By this point she'd shacked up with the other guy, after bringing him with her to help her move out of the house. Rick had put his foot down, refusing to allow the other guy in. Apparently words were exchanged. But that was it. Rick wasn't mad at Jen, and he was trying to give her time to figure things out. He felt that the blame rested on his own shoulders for not being able to make her happy.

Rick's a rider, and a good one. Over the next few weeks, I dragged him out from among the piles of dirty dishes in his lonely house on ride after ride. We stacked on road miles. We hit the trails. Rick's riding hadn't suffered any -- he was fast as ever, and also unfailingly polite, matching my pace and waiting when he'd get too far ahead.

One of the most technical rides in the area is in the woods surrounding a ski resort. It was autumn, and the trails were covered with leaves, hiding the many roots and rocks that peppered them. To make matters worse, it had rained recently, so the leaves were floating on a layer of slick, black mud. We rocketed through the trails as fast as we dared (well, as fast as I dared -- Rick, as always, had to wait for me), covering ourselves with mud and assorted scrapes from missed turns. About three miles into the ride the trail rises and curves up a steep hill. Among the local riders, its nickname is "The Impossible Climb." With the exception of a few minor deities who can ride anything, everyone tries it, and everyone blows it. It's never less than thirty degrees, and at its steepest it's around sixty.

Rick tried first, bombing down the hill leading into the climb and digging in, tacking across the face of the hill a couple times, legs churning in the smooth spin he always has. He made it about two-thirds of the way up before having to bail -- a respectable climb. I went next, and I got about halfway up before I spun out the rear wheel and lost it. I walked the bike up to the top where Rick was waiting for me. He sat there in the saddle, not moving, looking back down the hill. I got on my bike. "Ready?" I asked. He shook his head. "No," he said. "I need to try this a couple more times. I'm sorry, but I just need to make this climb today." He turned around and rode back down the hill and part of the way up the previous one, then tried the climb again. He didn't make it. So he tried it again, and again. The fifth time it all came together: the perfect line, crossing the hill to the outside of the turn. His front wheel started to come up and he shifted forward, but not too much, as I had -- his rear wheel dug in and his legs spun. He didn't have the relaxed climbing face the pros say we should have. His was tight in a grimace, and his breath hissed through his clenched teeth. But he made it. Once he crested the lip of the hill he paused, still on his bike, bracing himself against a tree, and he hunched his shoulders and sobbed like his life had burst. I rode on a bit and waited, and soon he came along the trail. "Sorry," he said, and we kept riding.

I don't know why Rick felt he needed to make the Impossible Climb that day. Maybe he thought it represented his waning relationship. Maybe he was sick of failing, and he needed to succeed. But during that climb, he transcended mountain biking. He wasn't just climbing that hill -- he was getting back on top of his life, regaining control, and it hurt. It would have been easier to stay at the bottom, to succumb to inertia and gravity, to more dirty dishes and self-doubt. And it wasn't like a feel-good movie: climbing that hill didn't give him a sense of immediate relief and well being that let him ride on with a sunny smile. Instead, succeeding seemed to hurt even worse. But he did succeed, and to do it he had to dig into a part of himself few of us have the willpower to go to, a core of drive and courage and heart. Shallow people don't have that. Rick did. Sorry, Jen, Rick's as deep as they come.

New trail in Monroe Michigan, Munson Park.

Story by Steve Balogh

There is now a rideable trail in Monroe. Located in the northern end of Munson Park, the trail is located in two sections of woods. The west loop is pretty much finished, and many of the locals have started riding it. The northern section is still being worked on, and will have more mileage than the west. Next year the "bean field" alongside the woods will become prairie grass, with a loop around that.

Although Monroe is not known for hills, this trail is rather unique. The west loop, just barely two miles long, is one of the more twisty trails I know of in Michigan. There are so many twists and turns it's almost impossible to get past 10mph here. The two small hills have a sharp right turn leading into them, making them challenging to get over. The northern loop will be straighter, with some more twists to be added later after the main loop in that section is completed. As I have been helping construct this trail, we've discovered about three huge Oak trees that are worth taking a look at. The northern section will add some more mileage to the whole trail.

Those of us creating the trail are a pretty diverse group that are not all mountain bikers. Scott Goocher of Jack's Bicycle and Fitness, did most of the marking, and has brought along his employees from Jack's, including Robert Foshag who asked for my help. The remaining group consists of Jim Tischler, the Monroe City planner (also a MTB'er who helped get this trail approved by the city), hikers ("Hiker Mike", who often posts on the BB), runners, bridges/boardwalks built by a local boy scout chapter, and of course other mountain bikers including April Wasserman and more from SE Michigan and Ohio. At least one or two city councilmen have also shown up to help. Todd Scott has even managed to make it there. Those in the picture I took are only a few of the people that have helped out so far.

Munson Park is located on Elm Street, west of Telegraph. Elm has an exit ramp off of I-75. To locate the trail within the park, drive all the way north to the end of the main road in the park, and park there by the bean field. Riding your bike, go right and follow the bean field counterclockwise and you will find the entrance to the west section in the southeast corner of the woods. This route around the bean field takes you over a land bridge over the creek. When exiting the west loop, turn left and keep going north, and you will see the entrance to the north section, but is not yet finished.



Photo by Steve Balogh



Photo by Todd Scott

Mt. Bikers Wed!!!

"On behalf of the MMBA, we wish longtime members and volunteers Shari Montrose and Robin Scurr the best on their recent wedding." Shari & Robin toss commemorative water bottles after the wedding ceremony.



Racing News



Photo by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

What do you want the CPS to be?

Every year I do the same thing, and I am sure this is common with most racers. April comes around and I am all fired up for the season to get underway. I look at the schedule, and seeing races for the next six months, think September is a long way off. Then, in the great John Madden way, BOOM! the end of the season is here.

Well, it isn't upon us yet. We just finished a very successful Fort Custer Time Trial, and we still have the venerable Addison Oaks fall race and the exciting new course in Aspen Park to partake of before the season is out. But, it isn't too late to start thinking about next year.

So, what would we like to see in our race series? The CPS is yours which I hope you realize. It is a service provided to the membership, as well as a promotional tool for the MMBA's advocacy mission. For that reason, it is prudent to garner the opinions of the racers to see what direction they would like the CPS to head. How would one do this? Well, just about every chapter is represented by someone at the CPS committee meetings. They are called the CPS Reps or Competition Committee Reps in the past. These individuals, in a properly working democratic format, would bring the thoughts and concerns of their chapter to the CPS meetings. We would then use that to make decisions about what changes, if any, need to be done. I have heard from many that they don't know who their reps are. Fair enough, as we have amassed most of them in the last off season. And, I hope this article spawns the desire in some to step forward and get involved. Even if your chapter has a rep, you can still help the CPS if you have the will. The next issue of the BRB will include contact info for each MMBA chapter that has a representative on the CPS board. These are the people that you should channel your

Continued on page 17

Give Cyclocross, or psychocross, racing a try this fall

Story by Jay Jones

Some say Cyclocross racing is not right. Others say it's 45 minutes of pain, or an hour, if you're an 'A' racer. Either way you look at it, it's a lot of self-inflicting pain and it's done by choice.

Cyclocross has been known as a fringe sport and for obvious reasons. It's done at the end of a long racing season, it's usually done in the nastiest of weather and you should have a specific bike to participate. But this year, the weather has been unusually cooperative and adding another bike to your stable is not a bad thing. Those who raced the entire series, are just a competitive bunch and nothing is wrong with that...so why the bad rap?

Last year I was able to participate in two cyclocross races and I had a blast. This year, I wasn't so fortunate and I chose to spectate the Cyclocross State Championships. This race was run with the Tailwind Cyclocross series' last race of the season, so you know you were going to witness some good racing! Not only were the State Championships on the line, but racers were fighting for position in the series and some were just looking to finish on the podium at

least once. So with so much at stake the racers were pretty much ready.

At high noon, the 'B' race gun went off, actually it was a shout, but you get the general idea. With the first 300 yards of the race start on a paved uphill, the effort made by the racers was phenomenal! They were off their saddles and turning the peddles like madmen and madwomen. With the excellent course layout you could wander from area to area and see

pretty much the whole race course. If you planned it right, you could see your favorite racers 2 or 3 times per lap. And with this race, that was good, because you didn't want to miss a second. Two racers broke away from the main pack pretty early and stayed out front for most of the race with one racer closing in the entire time. They finished in this order and then the main pack would come across the line in smaller packs and some by themselves, totally spent. As I said earlier, 45 minutes of pain, and it showed.

Shortly after all the 'B' racers made their way past the finish line, the 'A' group started. Again with a shout, they hit the

gas and started off very fast. It's faster then a road race, faster then a mountain bike race and I'm sure faster then a criterium. The point is to be ahead of the pack at the first sign of dirt and with this group they all had the same plan. The usual suspects were near the front, Jeff Weinert, Jonothan Card, Russ Tiles, young Brent Bookwalter and the perennial favorite, Scott Quiring. Some others tried to join this club, but with 2 laps out of the way their membership was revoked and these 5 were by themselves and putting the major hurt on everyone else. This 5-pack of rabid dogs took turns leading, some just pulling over as if to say, "I'm not working any more, it's your turn." Then the next lap, same spot, they would turn on the juice and see who would follow, much to their surprise, all four stragglers would soon be with him again.

As it was plain to see, these five all came here on a mission and no one was going to give in. With about a 1/4 of a lap remaining in the race, Jonothan Card took everyone by surprise and took off going up the last hill, which happened to be pavement. Within a short distance, he was able to put on about a 7 second gap. He was doing a great job at keeping the gap that way too, when all of a sudden a hairpin turn took him down. As he fought to get back up the rest of the pack was closing in very fast. He was able to mount his bike and slip in behind the first car of the freight train. But with his mojo in disarray, Mr. Card was not able to answer the following attacks. Everyone in this group was trying their best to be first coming off the last set of barriers, as it would be hard to pass after that. With this in mind all the spectators made their way to the finish area and they were not disappointed. Watching the last set of barriers was probably some of the best cyclocross racing I've seen...anywhere! Shoot, the whole race was probably some of the best bicycle racing I've ever seen anywhere, period! With all five racers entering the last set of barriers within a second of each other it was anyone's race. The slightest mistake would have cost you 3, maybe 4 positions. As they exited the barriers, it was Jeff Weinert in first, Russ Tiles in second, Brent Bookwalter in third, Jonothan Card in fourth and Scott Quiring in fifth. They would remain that way until the finish banner with all the spectators just standing around in awe. It truly was an amazing race.

Yeah, Cyclocross is crazy, it's run late in the season, the weather is usually crummy, and everyone is pretty much burned out from racing. But with racing like today, you couldn't tell. It had to be some of the finest racing I have ever seen. You have to hand it to those five cats, they were there for some serious business and they didn't disappoint.



Photo by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

To find a 'cross race near you check out these web sites for dates, times and more info on races this fall.

<http://www.altelco.net/~emenaker/cxHome.htm>

<http://www.tailwind.net/cgi-bin/racedesc.pl?cros>

Jeff Weinert is Michigan's top 'cross racer!

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Return to Leadville

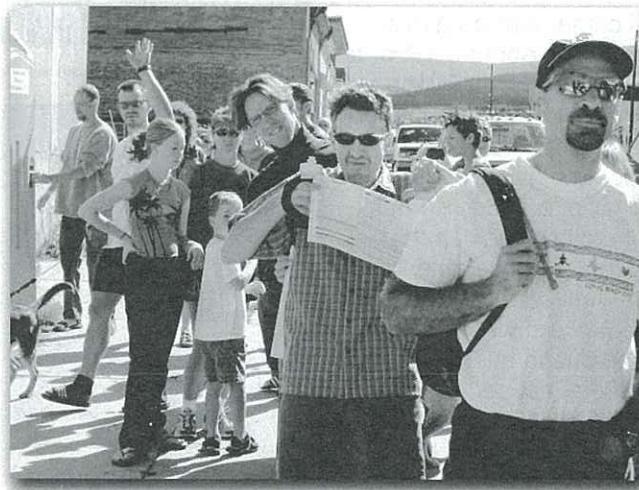
Michigan hit the Leadville Trail 100 Mountain Bike Race in Colorado

Story by Tom Lining

It's August 2nd, and I'm packing the car to take care of some unfinished business! Yes, it's time to return to the great little town of Leadville, Colorado for the Leadville Trail 100 Mountain Bike Race. I first attempted this race last year and because of back problems had to drop out 12 miles before the finish, it was a tough thing to swallow, especially after deciding that this race was going to be a once in lifetime experience, do the race and never look back. As I've now learned you just can't do that, there is something special about this event that makes you want to return year after year. This year I was in the company of some of Michigan's finest athletes, what a group! Todd Scott, Art Fleming, Robert Herriman, Tim DiFalco, my good friend Tony Misovski came along for support, and of course there was my son Jamie. as well. We had a pretty relaxed week, I could live this way forever, no problem, eat, ride, sleep, eat, ride sleep.

Friday morning, before the race, was our first trip to the town of Leadville. We get there around 9am and there's already a line of riders waiting to register. First, you get your NORBA license, then its time for your medical check in, they ask a few basic questions about your health and mark the info on a hospital wrist band which you will wear until your race is over, and finally, you pick up your swag bag. At 11:00 am they have a riders meeting and everyone looks forward to this meeting! This is where the organizers of the race, Senator Ken Chlouber and Merilee O'Neal, get the riders motivated for the race. Ken gives his "You are better than you think you are, you can do more than you think you can, believe in you!" speech. The one line that stuck with me this year was, "The pain will begin at mile 5, and will end around Christmas." We then went back to the Condo and got everything prepared. Now it wasn't so relaxed anymore, we were busy filling water bottles, getting gels ready, making sure bikes are all set, you could feel the tension in the air.

Saturday morning the alarm goes off at 5am. We all eat breakfast; this is our last solid meal until approximately 6pm. We load up and head to Leadville. It's sort of eerie when you get there, the sun is just starting to rise, the temperature is 36 deg and there 600+ mountain bikers nervously waiting for the race to start, some are dressed in winter attire others just shorts and jersey. Over the Megaphone we now hear "1 minute to start", it's a huge crowd of riders and the countdown begins, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and you hear



Photos courtesy Tom Lining

a shot gun blast, it has begun! Now 600+ riders going downhill at 30 something miles an hour is quite a site. I was nervous, cold, and very attentive to what was going on around me, this is a good time to have road racing experience! We finally get to the dirt; it's a two-track road that follows a pasture. I remember on the right there was a herd of cattle, and they were running! Imagine just sitting there chewing your grass like you do everyday and all of the sudden here come 600 mountain bikers! Now the trail starts to go up, you're at the first climb, St Keven's, this climb has the steepest sections that I can ride, up and over and then time

to enjoy a nice paved downhill. It's not long and you're climbing again up to the top of the infamous Power Line (Sugar Loaf Pass). At one point I hear a voice from above, "GO TOM," I thought, "it's to early in the race to be hearing voices!" It was Art; he noticed my yellow Michigan Youth Cycling jersey from above. Power Line is exactly that, a trail that's cut through the mountain with power lines, you can hear them crackle over your head. This is a very technical section, steep, rocky in places and very rutted. I make my way down Power Line and back onto some flat pavement. Soon I can see the first checkpoint at the Fish Hatchery, I get there and Jamie is waiting, telling me where to find Tony, I ride up to him, switch bottles and take off, more than 20 minutes faster than last year.



The course now is basically flat, by Colorado standards, you do go up and down but compared to what lies ahead, it's flat, mostly paved and dirt road. I ride into Checkpoint #2, Twin Lakes.

Once again, Jamie is flagging me down and letting me know where Tony is, I switch bottles and ride off. Now I know what is in store for me, the climb up to Columbine Mine at 12,600 ft. with ten miles of switchback road, which, at the top, is very rocky, portions of it hike a bike. I start my way up; get into a groove, feeling pretty good. About a quarter of the way up the leader passes me on his way down, just incredible how fast these guys are, its not too long and Robert passes me, a little later Todd, and right behind him, Tim. I make it to the tree line without walking, legs are tired and the trail turns into the rocky stuff. I start walking and notice a fellow behind me, we start to chat, he's wondering the same thing most of us are, why am I here? He tells me that he's 47 and too old for this, just about that time Art rides by and give me an encouraging hello. I mention to my chatting companion, that guy that just passed us, he'll be 60 this year, the guy looks at me, bewildered, and says, "You just had to tell me that, the dude is 60 and will finish in the top 150!" After a few minutes I look back, he had dropped away! Finally, I start to see the turn around. After more hiking and a little riding, I get there, 12,600 ft. and around 3 hours in the granny gear. I get off the bike, fill up my water bottle, take in the view and head back down. What's funny here is that on the way up, I never seem to notice my surroundings, but on the way down I realize just how beautiful it is up there!

Now its time for some fun, the descent is fast and you really need to pay attention. Twice I almost

slid off the edge of a turn, speeds are well over 30 mph. As much as your legs hurt riding up, your forearms and fingers hurt on the way down. Here you can start to see the agony some folks are in, there were riders still climbing Columbine, some so far back you know they're not going to make it. I get back to Twin Lakes, Tony looks at me and comments, "You look like !@#\$" I grab my bottle and head out. Soon I'm back to the Fish Hatchery, my legs are very tired, and this is from lack of training, nothing else! I meet up with Tony, he looks at me and can see that I'm in a heap of pain with 3 hours to make the 12 hour mark and two mountain passes to ride over? I tell him that I'm going to keep going, grab a bottle and then stop at the aid station for some solid food, eat few cookies, pretzels, and head out, now they wont see me until the finish! A rider passes me and yells out "Were going to make it, the buckle is ours!" As you leave Twin Lakes you can see Power Line, its about 4-5 miles to the base. From the road it looks short, but it's not, there are 8 false peaks! I ride right up to the steepest part and start my hike up. This is the most degrading section of the race; you're so close, yet so far. Here is where you really have to dig deep; find out what you're made of. My goal was to just keep moving forward, no stopping! I keep inching my way up, pass a woman sitting on the side of the trail, ask her if she's ok.

She replies, "I'm waiting for my heart rate to drop below 200." A little further up I see the guy who passed me, all excited about getting his buckle, he's lying there motionless, just staring at the rest of us. Here is where I meet with fellow Michigander Greg Iddings. Greg's in a world of hurt, and having done Leadville several times, he knew what lay ahead. Greg and I begin to talk and before you know it, were at the top, we ride down and realize that we won't make the 12-hour mark. Now riding up to the final checkpoint I lost Gregg, my legs just didn't have much left in them. It's a paved climb, nothing real difficult, unless you've already got 90 miles behind you. I ride a little, walk a little, just keep telling myself to move forward! In a race like this you think about everything and anything, its what gets you through each minute.

At times you get emotional because your tired, then you feel good, it's a day of ups and downs both physically and emotionally.

I make it to the final checkpoint and see Gregg again, we talked and decided that we could make the final cutoff, the 13-hour mark, and at least get a medal. We rode together, encouraging each other, thinking positive. Having someone to ride with really helped, because before I knew it, Gregg says, "Hey, there's Leadville!" We both smiled and kept riding. Now, we knew that making it in under 13 hours was going to be tough and decided that no matter how much it hurt we had to average at least 10 mph. We took turns pulling, I had to dig deeper into myself than ever before. One more rocky section and we'll be

in downtown. We had to walk this section but at the other end was pavement, one more small hill and we're done. Gregg's brother was waiting at the last turn and encouraged us both. There it was, the finish line! I was too tired to get emotional but I had finished it. My unfinished business is no more; I completed one of the hardest races in the country! I ride through the finish line to be greeted by all my friends, Jamie and the person handing out the medals. I shook Gregg's hand, we thanked each other and I went to the tent to eat! Not sure I could have made it by myself. I also find out that the guys were taking turns checking the first aid tent, at one point they had asked Jamie to check, but he refused, suppose he was scared to find me there, although I hope it was that he had confidence his Dad would finish.

The minute I crossed that finish line, thoughts of next year were already crossing my mind. My time was 12:51:47 Greg finished just ahead of me 12:51:38, Robert finished 13th at 8:12:15, Todd finished 27th at 8:28:43, Tim 28th at 8:32:18, Art finished 142nd at 9:53:29. It had been a long day for all of us. The hot shower and big, old, greasy burger I had that evening have never been better! More pictures of the Race and Riding can be found at my website www.luv2mtb.net



CPS and you Continued from page 13

concerns, recommendations, thoughts, etc. through. Of course you can bypass this line and contact the race director (me) directly via my information.

One point that I hope to leave here is that the CPS not only wants the racers input, but needs it. I can tell you that we make decisions that affect the CPS, and we would prefer they be those that are acceptable by the racers. The situation with the Pay Dirt style program last year indicated the passion for the CPS was definitely strong. It also highlighted a problem that exists, that ideas are difficult to observe by those that it will mainly affect. Attempts are going to be made this season to rectify this occurrence.

How would we prevent the scenario that existed last winter? Well, the CPS meetings will be starting up soon, and those monthly gatherings will determine what will happen for the 2003 season. We, the CPS board, will be throwing things around, discussing ideas and thoughts brought to us by the racers, reviewing the sites from the past season, and other subjects that need attention. Once we have some thoughts we will be giving them out, both on the web page and the BRB article, for review. You can also look up the meeting notes in the MMBA library on the website and see what was actually covered. Hopefully, this will allow the CPS board to get feedback regarding what we are looking towards, and allow the racers/members to get the much needed voice that we all want.

So, be on the lookout for these things and please use your voice. Tell your reps or myself what you feel we did well this last season, what could be improved, and even your ideas on how to do just that. Your opinion is welcome...the MMBACPS just needs to hear it. *CPS Director Terry Ritter:*

Only Two CPS Races left!

9/15/02 #11 Addison Oaks Fall Classic

This fast and open course north of Rochester tends to keep groups racing in packs like a road race. And like road racing, tactics can play a part in this race. Can you stay on the leader's wheel? Can you beat the pack to the technical singletrack and make some time on them? Show up and find out.

Contact: Oakland County Parks, 2800 Watkins Lake Road Waterford, MI 48328-1917, (248) 693-2432.

9/29/02 #12 Aspen Park Cross Country

The final race in the series is located in Gaylord! The **Aspen Park Singletrack** is located in a rolling 100 acre park that winds through stands of pine, hemlock and live beaver colonies. Watch out for fallen trees! This is going to be a fast course along with hill climbs and switchbacks.

Directions to the trail: Take I-75 exit 279, go north on Old 27 past first traffic light about a mile up. Look for Commerce Rd, on the right. There are two banks on each corner of the street. Turn right and follow road to the end. The parking lot is at the end of the road. Note that the race may be staged at the nearby middle school. To get to the school, follow I-75 exit 282 (the north Gaylord exit) and head east (right) towards town. Go through town. At the very edge of town turn right on Maple Street. Follow around curve, the school is on the right and very easy to spot. Contact: Tailwind Enterprises, (248) 634-6178.



Ride Free!



Photo by Bryan Mitchell (www.mountainbikemichigan.com)

Freeride Continued from page 7

"When I first started my job I had a very bad impression of freeriders. However, as I began to talk to them, I realized they just wanted to be involved. They are a group land managers have to pay attention to. They are extremely committed to their sport, and can be a great asset to a land manager"

Cimarron Chacon - St. George, UT, BLM Landscape Architect (from IMBA's web site)

"To me, freeriding means pushing the limits on the technical end of the mountain biking spectrum. This can be done responsibly, or irresponsibly. The lines that separate freeriding from other types of riding are fuzzy, and it's not really useful to define it exactly. What is important is that we recognize there are different riding styles out there and find ways to accommodate them, ideally with a varied network of marked trails. The key is to get all types of trail users, including freeriders, involved in the process to incorporate their ideas."

Krisztina Holly, Lexington, MA - Former president, New England Mountain Bike Association

Nick Long, Northeast Chapter President, injured in boating accident inspires CPS director.

Story by Terry Ritter:

Last week I was going through some things that came up in my most recent move. I have been dealing with some challenges lately, with my life pretty much thrown upside down. Change is good, of course, but it does present some stresses. Anyway, as I was reading this big pile of quotes I had scratched on pieces of paper over the years, I came across one that hit me.

"Your day wasn't terrible. World War II was terrible. Keep things in perspective."

How true that is. It is amazing how things start to happen in our lives and we suddenly forget the good things that we have to live for. If you are like me you often have to have things put back into perspective from time to time. My finding of the above quote nudged me in the right direction, but it was the unbelievable human experience I had this week that really put me on the right track.

Many of you may know that Nick Long, the president of the northeast chapter, was injured in a diving accident a few weeks back. He broke some vertebrae and is presently in the hospital. His medical outlook, though optimistic, is certainly cause for concern. He presently has no feeling below his chest, and a restricted use of his arms and hands. We all hope this improves, but just the thought of dealing with it makes one see the challenges that could be lying ahead. But, I am not writing this for pity, or what we could do for Nick. He doesn't want that. More importantly, this is about what Nick did for me.

Todd Scott, the MMBA president, and I were attending a marketing meeting at CMU this last week. We thought it a good move to stop in and see how Nick was doing. I can't say that I have met Nick more than a few times, but I did want to support a person that I thought would be in his time of darkness and need. I was all prepared to fake a happy face and try to cheer him up... try to pull him out of the depression I was certain would be gripping me if I were in his shoes. I even was sweating, thinking I

didn't know what I was going to say, and started to feel somewhat guilty that I was most likely going to feel pretty uncomfortable. Now I am thinking about my perspective, and honestly I could not imagine being anything but downcast if I had gone through what Nick had, to this point.

With a pale face I walked into Nick's room. There he lay, relaxed and at ease. He greeted Todd and me, and almost immediately and went into the progress his chapter has had with a project they were working on. He was on top of everything and was passing it along, assuring us, the whole time, that he was still dealing with all the parties involved and that things were taken care of. He told us about the surgery he had just been through which left me with the feeling that, though the prospects were hopeful, they were daunting, to say the least. Todd and Nick then discussed wheelchair bikes. Nick made a point, near the end of the conversation, to state that this was just a "minor stumbling block" in life, and that he would get through it.

I stood there in complete and utter awe! I had expected to see someone that needed a hand, who was dealing with what could possibly lie ahead and would cry out for some kind of pity. The experience could not be further from this case. Nick spoke with comfort and conviction toward continuing his life productively. It seemed he was a person who had been like this all his life, as if he had long ago accepted it. I was so impressed that at one point I had begun conversation with him and had totally forgotten that I was supposed to be uncomfortable. It was one of the most amazing things I had ever experienced. Here was a person that was possibly going to lose one of the great passions we all share, not to mention many other changes, and he was moving on and taking things in stride, looking like he wouldn't miss a beat.

I had gone to the hospital to help out Nick, hoping to give him something he needed. I left with something he gave me: A change in perspective. If he could deal with what he had ahead of him then I could do the same with my recent challenges in life.

Thank you, Nick. I'll see you on the trail soon.

Chapter Chatter

Pontiac Lake Chapter News

The remaining workdays at Pontiac Lake this year are:

Sunday, September 22

Sunday, October 13

Meet at the Organizational Campground parking lot off Teggerdine Rd on the West side of the park. Take M-59 to Teggerdine north. Go about 2 or 3 miles and turn east into the park entrance. The parking lot is on your left about ¼ mile in. Don't forget, the time you log at a maintenance day is credited toward your total in the Ed Berta First Across the Finish Line awards. If you log 10 hours trail work for 2002, you will get a gift as a reward for your efforts. Last year's recipients got a custom, stainless steel coffee mug.

Southeast Chapter News

The Southeast Chapter thanks the Tri-County Bicycle Association for the recent DALMAC grant. The grant money is earmarked for trail signs to be installed at the new Hickory Glen trail in Commerce Township.

North Chapter News

I was just notified by Harold Ward's wife that Harold (our chapter treasurer) is very ill with inoperable brain cancer. His doctors give him six months to live. Several of you have had a chance to meet and ride with Harold. He always has a smile on his face, even when riding up the grinder at Boyne. He has been a tremendous help with selling raffle tickets and the treasurer's duties, in addition to numerous hours spent on trail work.

Please put Harold Ward, his wife and family into your daily thoughts and prayers. We probably won't be seeing too much of Harold on the trails any longer. I truly hope you had a chance to speak with him, he is a great guy with a good sense of humor and loves to ride.

Harold doesn't have email so if you want to send off some good wishes, you can email them to me and I will print them off and mail or hand deliver them to him. Thanks.

Ride On!

Eric Isaacsen, president
MMBA North Chapter
eisaacsen@hotmail.com

MEMBER SHOPS

MICHIGAN MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION

The stores and services listed below are MMBA Members as of October 2001.

Those listed in bold text give 10% discounts to MMBA members!

It wouldn't hurt to thank them all the next time you're in their shop.

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Please send corrections to BRB@MMBA.ORG or call (248) 349-1937

Book Alert:

MOUNTAIN BIKING MICHIGAN by Erin Fanning and Keith Radwanski (Globe Pequot Press, September 2002) The brand new FalconGuide, **MOUNTAIN BIKING MICHIGAN** (The Globe Pequot Press, www.globe-pequot.com), by MMBA members Erin Fanning and Keith Radwanski outlines sixty-seven rides ranging from the breathtaking Grand Island Loop to the underused and rugged Gogebic Ridge Trail. Mountain bikers of all abilities will enjoy a classic assortment of rides, whether it is pounding up and down a challenging singletrack or rolling along a mellow forest-shrouded pathway. Covering the greater Detroit area to the Porcupine Mountains, **MOUNTAIN BIKING MICHIGAN** will point you in the right direction for fun and adventure. The book also includes tidbits about the region's history and geography that make this more than just a trail guide.

The FalconGuide Mountain Biking series is designed to help make all of your mountain biking adventures safe and memorable. Detailed ride descriptions make it easy to find trailheads and follow routes, easy-to-read maps help you to stay on track, and ratings allow you to decipher physical and technical difficulty. New and revised titles available in the series include: Northern California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, New York, Northern New England, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Southern California, and Southern New England. Globe Pequot Press can be contacted at 1-888-249-7586 or www.globe-pequot.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Keith and Erin quit their jobs in 1998 to travel full time in their recreational vehicle. This led to numerous adventures from kayaking in Lake Superior to mountain biking Sedona's red rocks and culminated with the researching and writing of Mountain Biking Michigan. Today, they split their time between Erin's native Idaho and Keith's home state of Michigan, where Keith is a manufacturer's representative. A freelance writer and researcher, Erin's articles have appeared in American Profile, Silent Sports, Oregon Outside, and RV Life. Keith and Erin are both members of the Michigan Mountain Biking Association.

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F.Y.I

FYI. The MMBA is now an official member of the Michigan Environmental Council. The MEC board unanimously approved our membership.

Promote your web page!
We've added world wide web pages to the member bike shop list - if your company's web site is not listed, drop a line to membership@mmba.org and we'll include it .

Contribute!

Want to get published in the BRB? The BRB welcomes submissions and artwork from MMBA members. This is your newsletter so send stuff! Email your story ideas, stories and photos to brb@mmba.org. If you can't email items or have questions call Bryan Mitchell at 248-349-1937. Keep the stories short and about Michigan or Michigan Riders. Email copy in the body of the email with no formatting or better yet in a Microsoft Word document, again with no formatting.

Photo guidelines: Make sure photos are in focus, the subject is fairly close and they are interesting. Also try to make sure faces are lit well. Email photos to bryan@bryanmitchell.com. Keep the files large. Try to send sizes of at least 5X7 at a resolution of 300ppi. (2000X2000 pixels and a file size of at least 2 mb) Email photos as JPEG attachments and don't imbed them in documents like Microsoft Word. (make sure they have .jpg at the end of the file name).



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